



LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

C454: Purchasing a Herb at an Inexpensive Price (3)



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"Making a fool of you all? You are misunderstanding me!"

Even though the other party's face was turning green, Zhang Xuan didn't fall into a panic. Instead, he chuckled lightly and said, "I've only said that it's a fake because you are intending to use it to forge Verdant Crystalline Pills, I've never said that it isn't a Verdant Bamboo!"

Confused by Zhang Xuan's words, the elder and Liu Chang glanced at one another in bewilderment. Eventually, the latter couldn't hold it back any longer and asked, "What do

you mean?"

The attendants, Zhao Feiwu, and the others were baffled as well. They had no idea what Zhang Xuan was up to.

"Simple, there's no doubt that this is a Verdant Bamboo, but if you were to use its leaves to forge Verdant Crystalline Pills, I can guarantee you that not only will the pills be ineffective, one will even die upon consumption!" Zhang Xuan said.

"Death? You must be joking! Transcendent Mortals have the ability to communicate with the world and sense the surroundings. While it grants them great strength, it also makes them particularly vulnerable to external influences, making it easy for them to breed inner demons. The Verdant Crystalline Pill forges a Heart of Crystal within one, thus significantly reducing the damage one could suffer from inner demons. There's only benefits to be derived from its consumption, so how could anyone die from consuming it?" Liu Chang uttered in disbelief.

Even the elder couldn't help but shake his head.

As a Transcendent Mortal, one's will could meld together with one's environment to move the energy in one's surroundings. However, this made it particularly easy for inner demons to appear. The Verdant Crystalline Pill was the best medicine for one to dispel inner demons, and he had even consumed one himself. Its effectiveness was so great that he couldn't even put it into words, so how could one possibly die from it?

This was clearly nonsense!

Besides, as a skilled appraiser, he had also appraised the Crystalline Pill for others, and the other party had consumed it before him. There were no problems whatsoever with it.

To die from consuming it... was completely unheard of.

"Can you prove it?"

The elder turned to Zhang Xuan and harrumphed.

If the other party couldn't prove it, then he could only be spouting nonsense.

"If it were anyone else, there would be no way to prove it other than forging the pill and consuming it. However... it just happens that I do have a way to prove it!"

As though expecting the other party to ask this question, Zhang Xuan's lips curled up. He turned to Liu Chang and asked, "I'll have to trouble you to fetch a piece of leaf for me!"

Liu Chang turned to the elder, and upon seeing the latter nod his head, he walked over and plucked out a leaf.

"Try burning it with fire!" Zhang Xuan instructed.

"Teacher..."

The elder gestured toward him.

"Do as he says!"

Even though he didn't quite trust the other party's words, the other party's calmness had unnerved him.

If the other party were truly spouting nonsense, the other party would have surely flustered before his immense strength and authority. Yet, not only was the other party calm, his movements also exuded deep confidence. This casted doubt in the elder's mind.

Could the Verdant Bamboo... really be a fake?

But that's impossible!

He had specially examined it several times, and regardless of whether it was its stem, leaves, aura, degree of hardness... There were no problems whatsoever.

"Yes!"

Upon receiving his teacher's consent, Liu Chang nodded and took out an ignitable fire roll. Then, he turned to Zhang Xuan and harrumphed coldly, "This single leaf is worth at least dozens of spirit stones. If your words turn out to be a lie, I'll be expecting you to compensate our loss..."

There were only twelve leaves on the Verdant Bamboo. Given that the entire bamboo was worth three hundred spirit stones, every leaf was worth an exorbitant sum.

A single leaf was more than sufficient to purchase a city in Tianwu Kingdom.

In that sense, every leaf was literally worth a city.

Yet, due to this fellow's claim, they were going to burn a single leaf. The huge loss left even a 2-star appraiser like him with an aching heart.

"Don't worry, if there's no problem with the Verdant Bamboo, I'll surely compensate you. However... I'm afraid that you won't be saying such words in a moment's time," Zhang Xuan said.

"Hmph, let's see what you're up to then!"

Seeing the confidence on Zhang Xuan's face, Liu Chang harrumphed. He ignited the ignitable fire roll and placed it beneath the leaves.

Weng!

After around two minutes, just as Liu Chang was about to demand Zhang Xuan to compensate them, his hands suddenly jolted violently. The green leaf abruptly turned black and an incomparably pungent smell exuded from it. If there was hell in this world, this was probably what it would smell like. The sight felt extremely sinister.

"Ah..."

Shocked, Liu Chang subconsciously let go of the fire roll and the leaf.

"This..."

Jin Conghai and Gu Mu stared at one another in shock.

"Ah?"

The elder was initially looking at Zhang Xuan nonchalantly, but at this moment, his face abruptly warped in shock. He swiftly stepped forward to grab the leaf with his hands, and he stared at it with a grim expression, as though unable to believe the sight before him. "What a potent poison. If this were infused into the Verdant Crystalline Pill, not only would it not dispel one's inner demons, it would even seep into one's zhenqi, assault one's internal organs, causing one to die on the spot..."

As he spoke, cold sweat trickled down his forehead.

If the other party hadn't said anything at all and he'd taken the Verdant Bamboo back to have it forged into Verdant Crystalline Pills, many people would have died. At the same time, his reputation would be completely ruined!

On top of that, he was intending to consume one himself to try for a breakthrough into a higher realm...

If he were to really eat it... Putting aside his reputation and his standing, even his life would be gone.

"What's the meaning of this?"

The elder couldn't maintain his calmness any longer. He turned to look at the attendant with an incredibly awful complexion.

Dang lang!

Liu Chang's face was also incomparably dark. With a flick of his wrist, he drew his sword and pointed it toward the attendant, threatening to kill the latter as soon as the slightest bit of nonsense was uttered from his mouth.

If it were just a fake, they could only blame themselves for the lack of acuity in their judgement. However, it was clear that someone had laced the leaves of the Verdant Bamboo with lethal poison. From the start to the end, that young man had only moved

his mouth, and only the attendant had come into contact with it. Who else could the culprit be if not him?

"Ah... Hall Master Sai, please spare me! I'm just an attendant, I've no idea what's going on. Besides, how could I possibly obtain poison of such high grade that even you're unable to perceive it..."

The attendant's knee immediately caved in, and he hurriedly kowtowed non-stop, pleading for the other party to spare him.

Other people might not know this elder's identity and the authority he wielded, but he was well aware of it!

To that elder, killing him was no different from killing an ant.

Thus, not daring to hesitate in the least, he immediately kneeled down and admitted his fault.

"Alright, he's indeed unaware of it!"

Recovering from his shock, the elder realized that he had also blamed the attendant erroneously. Thus, he gestured for Liu Chang to sheathe his sword.

Given the lethality and inconspicuous nature of the poison hidden within the Verdant Bamboo, it must be at least a grade-4 poison.

In other words, the one who poisoned the Verdant Bamboo was most probably at least a 4-star poison master. How could a person of that standing be willing to serve as a mere attendant in the First Class Pavilion? Besides, if the other party truly wanted to make a move on him, given how his guard was down just now, there was no need for him to go through so much trouble.

After all, he might not necessarily buy the Verdant Bamboo. Thus, the hypothesis that the other party had poisoned the Verdant Bamboo in advance to harm him didn't seem to hold.

"Hmph!"

Liu Chang sheathed his sword, but he still maintained an air of hostility.

The medicinal herb that his teacher bought was actually laced with lethal poison. If news were to spread, his teacher would be in great trouble.

To successfully lace a medicinal herb within the First Class Pavilion with poison, who in the world could it be?

And what did he hope to achieve from this?

"Little brother, thank you for your help!"

The elder turned to Zhang Xuan once more, and this time, instead of disdain and coldness, his gaze was filled with commendation and respect.

Even he was unable to discern any problem with this Verdant Bamboo. Yet, the other party was able to determine that there was a problem with it without even getting close to it. His eye of discernment was way too fearsome!

Most probably, the other party's appraising ability was even higher than his.

Fearsome!

"Now, it's been proved that the Verdant Bamboo is a fake, right?" Zhang Xuan glanced at the elder.

"Yes... It's a fake!" After a moment of hesitation, the elder nodded.

The main purpose of a Verdant Bamboo was to forge it into a pill to supplement one's cultivation. Yet, this stalk would kill the one who ingests it. In that sense, it could indeed be considered a fake.

"Actually, you need not blame him nor the First Class Pavilion. They weren't the ones who laced the Verdant Bamboo with poison. In fact, it wasn't the doing of a human at all!" Placing his hands behind his back, Zhang Xuan lifted his head slightly and spoke with composure.

"It wasn't the doing of a human?"

The elder was bewildered. Even Jin Conghai and Gu Mu couldn't help but turn their gazes over.

Other people might not know too much about poison, but the two of them were true poison masters. They had grown up alongside poison, and they possessed broad knowledge in the field.

The poison contained in the Verdant Bamboo was extremely bizarre. It had already melded within the veins of the leaves, making it extremely difficult to be noticed. On top of that, the poison was exceptionally potent such that it could even kill a Transcendent Mortal 3-dan expert easily. All evidence pointed to it being the doing of a 4-star poison master.

If it wasn't the doing of a human, then... where did the poison come from?

"Bring me the information on the production of the Verdant Bamboo!"

Instead of answering the crowd's doubts, Zhang Xuan turned to the attendant from before and instructed.

"Yes..."

Upon hearing the young man speaking up for him and the First Class Pavilion, the attendant flashed him a look of gratitude before hurriedly walking out. Not too long later, he returned with a book in his hands.

Most larger retailers would look thoroughly into the background of the artifacts they bought and compile it into a book so as to prepare their attendants for the questions of the customers.

This could enhance the value of the treasure and track down the source of the problem if a fault appeared in the goods.

"Read it out loud!" Zhang Xuan instructed.

"Un!" The attendant nodded. Flipping open the book, he began reciting, "Verdant Bamboo, originated from Hongxu Marsh. It was found by a merchant company and four months ago, the merchant company used a unique method to pick it and delivered it here..."

The information regarding the Verdant Bamboo was extremely detailed, and it even included details on who was the one who dug it out, who was the one who delivered it, where was the trade conducted, what kind of method was used to preserve its freshness...

All in all, the introduction took up more than several hundred words.

However, upon hearing the introduction, not only did the crowd not feel enlightened, they fell into even deeper confusion.

The Verdant Bamboo was extremely well-guarded and there was no chance for a poison master to lay his hands on it at all. Thus, this made the possibility of it being a human doing extremely unlikely.

But if it wasn't a human doing, then how did the poison get here?

"The lethal poison had seeped into the branches and leaves, but yet, there isn't any damage on the plant at all. In fact, it's impossible for one to discern that it's poisoned from its outer appearance. Even 4-star poison masters would require a long duration of time to achieve such a feat!"

Jin Conghai spoke with a grim expression. He was also intrigued by this matter.

If those records were real, there was indeed no way for anyone to strike at all.

After all, it was no easy task for even a 4-star master teacher to poison the Verdant Bamboo so inconspicuously.

One had to know that lethal poison had an adverse effect on plants as well.

"What's going on?"

The more Appraiser Liu Chang listened on, the more confused he became. Eventually, unable to withstand his curiosity anymore, he turned to Zhang Xuan and asked, "You still don't understand?"

Zhang Xuan chuckled and said, "Fine, I'll explain the matter then! I believe all of us here should know what the specialty of Hongxu Marsh!"

"Specialty? That region seems to specialize in the production of [Withered Leaf Tea]... Could it be related to that?"

The elder couldn't help but turn to look at Zhang Xuan.

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